

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A cheese snack, comprising:

an extruded annular natural cheese product;

a flavoring core co-extruded within said natural cheese product, said core being normally flowable at room temperature, said product and core having substantially planar end faces with said core being exposed at said end faces; and

wherein said core does not substantially flow out of said natural cheese product during processing of said cheese snack prior to consumption ~~when said product is stored at room temperature.~~

Claim 2 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 1 wherein said natural cheese product is selected from the group consisting of mozzarella, cheddar and Monterey Jack cheese.

Claim 3 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 1 wherein said core is selected from the group consisting of pizza sauce, salsa, soft cheese, peanut butter and fruit flavoring.

Claim 4 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 1 wherein said core has a normal viscosity of about 100-500 grams when measured by a Texture Profile Analyzer at room temperature before said cheese snack is formed.

Claim 5 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 1 wherein said flavoring core contains at least one of the group consisting of flavoring, maltodextrine, starch and hydrocolloids.

Claim 6 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 5 wherein said flavoring core contains up to about 1.5% starch.

Claim 7 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 5 wherein said flavoring core contains up to about 3% maltodextrine.

Claim 8 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 5 wherein said flavoring core contains pieces of flavoring material.

Claim 9 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 1 and further comprising an exterior coating on said cheese product.

Claim 10 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 1 wherein said cheese product and flavoring core are frozen for a time sufficient to prevent water in said core from migrating into said cheese product.

Claim 11 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 1 wherein said flavoring core contains at least one hydrocolloid in an amount sufficient to prevent said flavoring core from leaking out of said cheese product but to prevent said core from drying out.

Claim 12 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 11 wherein said one hydrocolloid is present in an amount equal to about 0.2-0.4% by weight.

Claim 13 (original): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 11 wherein said hydrocolloid is selected from the group consisting of guar, locust, xanthan, agar and carrageenan.

Claim 14 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 1 wherein said flavoring core consists of non-cheese substances.

Claim 15 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 1 wherein said cheese snack has a normal processing temperature.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A cheese snack, comprising:

an extruded annular natural cheese product;

a flavoring core co-extruded within said natural cheese product, said core containing water and being normally flowable at room temperature, said product and core having substantially planar end faces with said core being exposed at said end faces; and

wherein said water does not migrate from said core to said natural cheese product during shipping of said cheese snack ~~when said product is stored at room temperature.~~

Claim 17 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 16 wherein said natural cheese product is selected from the group consisting of mozzarella, cheddar and Monterey Jack cheese.

Claim 18 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 16 wherein said core is selected from the group consisting of pizza sauce, salsa, soft cheese, peanut butter and fruit flavoring.

Claim 19 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 16 wherein said core has a normal viscosity of about 100-500 grams when measured by a Texture Profile Analyzer at room temperature before said cheese snack is formed.

Claim 20 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 16 wherein said flavoring core contains at least one of the group consisting of flavoring, maltodextrine, starch and hydrocolloids.

Claim 21 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 20 wherein said flavoring core contains up to about 1.5% starch.

Claim 22 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 20 wherein said flavoring core contains up to about 3% maltodextrine.

Claim 23 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 20 wherein said flavoring core contains pieces of flavoring material.

Claim 24 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 16 and further comprising an exterior coating on said cheese product.

Claim 25 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 16 wherein said flavoring core contains at least one hydrocolloid in an amount sufficient to prevent said flavoring core from leaking out of said cheese product but to prevent said core from drying out.

Claim 26 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 25 wherein said one hydrocolloid is present in an amount equal to about 0.2-0.4% by weight.

Claim 27 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 25 wherein said hydrocolloid is selected from the group consisting of guar, locust, xanthan, agar and carrageenan.

Claim 28 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 16 wherein said flavoring core consists of non-cheese substances.

Claim 29 (previously presented): A cheese snack as set forth in claim 16 wherein said cheese snack has a normal processing temperature.